

Proclamation 5151 of February 13, 1984

National Surveyors Week, 1984

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

In the development of our country, the role of the surveyor has been of vital importance. In colonial days, surveyors were among the leaders in the community—statesmen, influential citizens, and shapers of cultural standards, including people such as George Washington and Thomas Jefferson. It was the surveyor's work that determined the boundaries of land, the greatest economic asset in the colonies. Thomas Jefferson chaired a committee in 1784 to devise a plan for disposing of lands west of the Thirteen Colonies. He argued that surveying before sale was necessary to prevent overlapping claims and to simplify deeds and registers. He reportedly wrote a plan which was debated in Congress, and in modified form was adopted as the Land Ordinance of May 20, 1785. The ordinance established the Public Land Survey System (PLSS)—the rectangular system that continues in effect today in 30 midwestern and western states.

Since 1785, the nature of surveying has changed dramatically. No longer is surveying limited to the description and location of land boundaries. Today, hydrographic surveys are important to the use of all our bodies of water; engineering surveys are utilized in the study and selection of engineering construction; geodetic surveys determine precise global positioning for such activities as aircraft and missile navigation; and cartographic surveys are used for mapping and charting, including the use of photogrammetry, the science of using aerial photographs for measurement and map production. Many services are provided through the use of sophisticated equipment and techniques, such as satellite-borne remote sensing devices and automated positioning, measuring, recording, and plotting equipment.

In recognition of the significant contribution made by surveyors to the United States, the Congress, by Senate Joint Resolution 44, has authorized and requested the President to designate the week beginning on March 11, 1984, as "National Surveyors Week."

97 Stat. 1300.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim the week beginning March 11, 1984, as National Surveyors Week. I urge the people of the United States to observe this week with appropriate ceremonies and activities paying tribute to professional surveyors and their contribution to society. I invite all Americans to look back at the historic contributions of surveying and look ahead to the new technologies which are constantly modernizing this honored and learned profession.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 13th day of Feb., in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-four, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and eighth.

RONALD REAGAN